

# News

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**BLS 04-17**

**FOR RELEASE:**

**Friday, February 20, 2004**

## **SAN DIEGO CONSUMER PRICES INCREASE 1.4 PERCENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2003 – 3.4 PERCENT ABOVE A YEAR AGO**

Consumer prices in the San Diego metropolitan area rose 1.4 percent during the second half of 2003 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Acting Regional Commissioner Nancy Treadwell said advances in the housing index, influenced by shelter costs, were largely responsible for the overall increase in the past six months. Compared to the same period a year ago, the all items index rose 3.4 percent.

During the final six months of 2003, the overall housing index advanced 2.6 percent. Housing prices increased 5.2 percent since the second half of 2002, the largest 12-month increase among all major categories. The shelter component rose 3.1 percent for the six-month period and 5.9 percent over the year. Within shelter, rent of primary residence advanced 3.4 percent while owners' equivalent rent of primary residence increased 2.6 percent in the second half of 2003. From a year ago, these indexes rose 7.2 and 5.7 percent, respectively. The household fuels and utilities category advanced 1.8 percent during the second half of 2003 and was 7.0 percent higher than the same period in 2002. Within household fuels, the natural gas service index edged up 0.5 percent during the last half of 2003, but rose 24.9 percent for the year due to large increases in the first half of the year. Prices for electricity increased 2.9 percent during the second half of the year and advanced 4.9 percent over the previous year.

The food and beverages category advanced 1.4 percent since the first half of 2003 and moved up 3.3 percent over the year. During the second half of 2003, grocery prices, as measured by the food at home index, increased 2.2 percent while the prices for food away from home rose 1.0 percent. For the same period, alcoholic beverage prices gained 0.6 percent. Over the past year, grocery prices went up 5.0 percent, and prices for eating out rose 2.4 percent. Alcoholic beverage prices increased 1.4 percent for the year.

The overall transportation index decreased 1.0 percent during the second half of 2003. Gasoline prices decreased 2.4 percent in the final six months of 2003. Compared to a year ago, however, San Diego drivers paid 14.1 percent more for gasoline.

Prices for education and communication increased 3.0 percent over the second half of 2003, the largest six-month gain of all major expenditure categories. The six-month gain for the second half of

2003 matched the second half of 2002 for the largest increase in this category since it was first published in 1998. Over the year, the index increased by 1.6 percent.

The miscellaneous other goods and services index moved up 1.0 percent during the last six months of 2003. From the second half of 2002 to the second half of 2003, the index advanced 4.5 percent.

Medical care prices increased 0.3 percent in the second half of 2003 and measured 1.8 percent above last year's level.

The index for recreation edged down 0.2 percent in the last six-month period, following a 0.7 percent advance during the first six months of 2003. Over the year, recreation prices increased 0.5 percent.

During the past six months, apparel prices increased 1.4 percent. From a year ago, the apparel index fell 2.3 percent and was the only major expenditure category to post an annual price decrease.

The area's Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers advanced to 206.7 (1982-84=100) during the second half of 2003. This means a market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in 1982-84 would have cost \$206.70 during the last six months of 2003. Local area CPI data are not seasonally adjusted.

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Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods

San Diego<sup>1</sup>, CA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 2nd half 2003 from-	
	2nd half 2002	1st half 2003	2nd half 2003	2nd half 2002	1st half 2003
Expenditure category					
All items .....	200.0	203.8	206.7	3.4	1.4
All items (October 1967=100) .....	676.3	689.2	698.9	-	-
Food and beverages .....	185.3	188.7	191.4	3.3	1.4
Food .....	183.4	186.9	189.7	3.4	1.5
Food at home .....	175.5	180.3	184.3	5.0	2.2
Food away from home .....	191.2	193.7	195.7	2.4	1.0
Alcoholic beverages .....	200.2	201.8	203.1	1.4	0.6
Housing .....	217.3	222.9	228.6	5.2	2.6
Shelter .....	242.2	248.9	256.5	5.9	3.1
Rent of primary residence .....	225.4	233.6	241.6	7.2	3.4
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence <sup>1</sup> .....	256.4	264.1	271.0	5.7	2.6
Fuels and utilities .....	151.6	159.3	162.2	7.0	1.8
Fuels .....	127.0	134.4	137.6	8.3	2.4
Gas (piped) and electricity .....	126.6	133.8	137.1	8.3	2.5
Electricity .....	127.6	130.1	133.9	4.9	2.9
Utility natural gas service .....	113.7	141.3	142.0	24.9	0.5
Household furnishings and operations .....	171.3	171.9	169.7	-0.9	-1.3
Apparel .....	127.4	122.8	124.5	-2.3	1.4
Transportation .....	164.7	168.8	167.1	1.5	-1.0
Private transportation .....	158.5	162.6	160.6	1.3	-1.2
Motor fuel .....	125.8	146.9	143.5	14.1	-2.3
Gasoline (all types) .....	126.1	147.4	143.9	14.1	-2.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular <sup>2</sup> .....	129.8	152.4	148.3	14.3	-2.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade <sup>2 3</sup> .....	111.3	129.8	127.0	14.1	-2.2
Gasoline, unleaded premium <sup>2</sup> .....	129.3	149.3	147.3	13.9	-1.3
Medical care .....	288.0	292.4	293.2	1.8	0.3
Recreation <sup>4</sup> .....	130.6	131.5	131.2	0.5	-0.2
Education and communication <sup>4</sup> .....	102.7	101.3	104.3	1.6	3.0
Other goods and services .....	283.7	293.6	296.4	4.5	1.0

See footnotes at end of table.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods

San Diego<sup>1</sup>, CA (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (Continued)

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 2nd half 2003 from-	
	2nd half 2002	1st half 2003	2nd half 2003	2nd half 2002	1st half 2003
Commodity and service group					
All items .....	200.0	203.8	206.7	3.4	1.4
Commodities .....	164.2	165.6	164.5	0.2	-0.7
Commodities less food and beverages .....	151.5	151.9	149.1	-1.6	-1.8
Nondurables less food and beverages .....	144.9	149.3	149.1	2.9	-0.1
Durables .....	161.1	157.6	152.1	-5.6	-3.5
Services .....	231.5	237.5	244.0	5.4	2.7
Special aggregate indexes					
All items less medical care .....	195.5	199.3	202.2	3.4	1.5
All items less shelter .....	183.6	186.3	187.0	1.9	0.4
Commodities less food .....	153.9	154.4	151.7	-1.4	-1.7
Nondurables .....	166.1	170.1	171.3	3.1	0.7
Nondurables less food .....	149.5	153.7	153.5	2.7	-0.1
Services less rent of shelter <sup>1</sup> .....	228.9	234.9	239.6	4.7	2.0
Services less medical care services .....	225.3	231.4	237.9	5.6	2.8
Energy .....	126.3	141.8	141.1	11.7	-0.5
All items less energy .....	207.9	210.8	213.9	2.9	1.5
All items less food and energy .....	213.2	216.0	219.3	2.9	1.5

<sup>1</sup> San Diego County only.

<sup>2</sup> Index is on a November 1982=100 base.

<sup>3</sup> Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

<sup>4</sup> Indexes on a December 1994=100 base.

<sup>5</sup> Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.